



31st Fighter Wing: The U.S. Air Force's fighter wing south of the Alps

THE VIGILEER

Vol. 53 No. 1

January 12, 2007

Aviano Air Base, Italy

Fly Bys

COLA survey

The 31st Fighter Wing will conduct an online cost-of-living allowance survey through Jan. 31. The survey will assist the Department of Defense in determining future COLA for members stationed at Aviano.

The survey takes about 30 minutes to complete and asks information about on-base and off-base spending habits. The survey can be completed by going to <https://www.perdiem.osd.mil/oscola/lps/italy/>

Spouse It Up

The next Spouse It Up is from 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Wednesday at the Community Center in Area One. The theme is cowboy roundup and events include line dancing and a chili cook-off. For more information, call the Airman and Family Readiness Center at Ext. 5407.

MLK birthday

A birthday party in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. is from 3:30 to 6 p.m. today at the Community Center in Area One. For more information, call Master Sgt. Virginia Wimmer at Ext. 5519.

Jo Dee Messina rocks Aviano

By Senior Airman
Sarah Gregory
31st Fighter Wing
Public Affairs

Country music star Jo Dee Messina rocked the house for more than 1,200 fans during a free concert in Hangar One Saturday night.

"It was incredible entertainment and it was definitely well worth volunteering to set up for the show," said concert-goer Staff Sgt. Jason Beene, 31st Communications Squadron. "It was the best USO show I've seen in my seven years in the Air Force."

The concert was part of an Italian USO tour. After her concert here, Ms. Messina performed in Vicenza Monday night and in Naples Wednesday.

While this was Ms. Messina's first time performing for the military overseas, she has put on numerous performances for military members stateside with the help of Spirit of America, an organization that helps bring entertainment to the bases in the U.S.

"If there's a base between shows, we'll stop by and do



Photo by Airman 1st Class Michael Dorus

Country music star Jo Dee Messina sings to the crowd during a free USO concert in Hangar One Saturday.

a show," she said. "And then I did a function with the USO in Washington and asked them about going to see the troops overseas. We've done so much work with them at home that I was like, OK, let's see what else we can do. So I asked USO and they brought me over here."

For Ms. Messina, whose father retired from the Navy and uncle from the Coast Guard, performing for troops is about showing her support and being there for them.

"It always seems that a

military crowd is more appreciative, because they don't have the option to have as much entertainment as a civilian audience," she said.

Before her concert, Ms. Messina held an autograph session at the base exchange, where fans began lining up hours before her scheduled arrival. Although she mostly signed CDs, posters, and pictures here, Ms. Messina did say that she was once asked to sign a loaf of bread. She likes doing autograph sessions because "It's always

See Concert, Page 7

Volunteers: Support the base community by volunteering time at the post office. Call Ext. 7119 for information or to sign up.

*World's Finest
MMVA/DUI counter*

5 days ...

Since Aviano's last DUI.

45 ...

Major Motor Vehicle Accidents



Year in review

From competing in the Aviano Olympics to supporting the Global War on Terror, Aviano has had one busy year.

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Bratislava

Visit the picturesque city of Bratislava, situated on both banks of the Danube, and experience Eastern European flair with a modern culture.

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Deadline info: The deadline for submitting information is close of business Thursday one week prior to publication. Send all information by e-mail to the Vigileer at vigileer@aviano.af.mil. Faxed articles will not be accepted by the staff. The public affairs office is located in Bldg. 1360, Rm. 19. The Vigileer staff can be reached at Ext. 7344.

Editorials: We want to hear from you. Flex your writing talents and share your thoughts with the community. Commentaries must be 500 to 700 words. Topics must be applicable to the Air Force, Aviano and appeal to the general public.

World's Finest: Messages can be submitted for appreciation, retirements, awards, good service, promotions and graduations.

From the Top: Those Who Lead

31st Fighter Wing

Commander's Corner

By Brig. Gen. Robert Yates
31st Fighter Wing commander

World's Finest Wing – Good morning Aviano. This week I'm having a hard time getting my hands to type as I prepare to attend a funeral service for a beautiful young lady. A beautiful life was lost to us all over the past weekend. Ms. Vanessa Rita Russo was a vibrant part of the American and Italian communities – American Dad, Italian Mom. She was a ray of light in this world, and I must say goodbye to her this afternoon. My heart is heavy, my mind somber as I prepare myself to attend to honor her.

With heartfelt sympathy and great emotion I will bid farewell to Ms. Vanessa Rita Russo, student at Aviano American High School, volleyball player, and wonderful young lady. I will do so for myself and for you all. I wish her family strength in this time of their grief; and I want them to know that we all share in their grief and immense sense of loss. We will all remember Vanessa, and we will do our best to support her family and friends with our actions, heartfelt sympathy and prayers.

As we approach this weekend, I want to address another subject that is on my mind: Drinking and driving. Bluntly I say this: There is no room for drinking and driving on the World's Finest team. If there is in your world, you're not on the team. And everyone on the team – skill players, linemen, linebackers, quarterbacks, everyone – I need you all to give your best effort today, tomorrow and always to apply teamwork to this issue, and employ the wingman concept to snuff out drinking and driving and not lives.

Drinking and driving is not a mistake; the potential ramifications, the toll that it exacts, is too horrible to characterize it as a mistake. It's much, much worse. Don't do it. Don't drink and drive. Plan ahead, take care of one another, be a member of the World's Finest team ... drive responsibly, drive slowly, drive sober or don't drive. Be on the team ... period.

And leaders – enforce this without exception, without further thought, without delay.

On the operations side this week, I'd like to offer my highest praise to the men and women of the 510th Fighter Squadron – operations and maintenance (Aircraft Maintenance Squadron) for a textbook launch on Wednesday before first light.

Their performance, unseen by the majority of World's Finest teammates, was magnificent! From phase prep, to aircraft pre-flight, start and 'red ball' maintenance, taxi, launch and finally – in-flight execution – the Buzzards did it as it's supposed to be done. And by the way, all of these aircraft arrived "Code One!" And every member of this Wing deserves credit for their success – it takes an entire wing to produce an F-16 sortie and it cannot be done any better! Magnificent performance!!

This weekend we celebrate the life and inspiration of Dr. Martin Luther King. I was alive to hear the "I have a dream" speech...not in person but on the evening news. What the good Dr. King did for this world remains an inspiration to me, and I hope it is also inspires you. I want to share a quote from Dr. King that has inspired me – a quote encouraging us to be courageous despite the pressures of the world or our troubles:

"Many people fear nothing more terribly than to take a position which stands out sharply and clearly from the prevailing opinion. The tendency of most is to adopt a view that is so ambiguous that it will include everything and so popular that it will include everybody."

I can relate to this so very well. Magnetic North for Dr. King was doing what was right. He allowed nothing to get in his way, and inspired so many others to do so as he pursued 'doing what is right.' We can all take pause this weekend to apply Dr. King's words to our lives. I will, and I hope you will as well.

This weekend have the courage to do what is right. Stand out sharply and clearly for what is right. Drive safely and soberly. Take care of one another. Do not be fearful about taking a stand for what's right. Remember Dr. King's words and deeds as you enjoy this holiday in his honor on Monday. God bless you and yours now and always. Please remember our two Airmen in the hospital and keep them in your thoughts and prayers.



Aviano Airman of the Week

Name: Airman 1st Class Victoria Drefs
Unit: 31st Logistics Readiness Squadron
Job: POL distribution driver
Hometown: Armour, S.D.
Hobbies: Playing basketball and traveling
Why joined: I joined for the traveling opportunities and to continue my education.



Program supports new, expecting parents

By Senior Airman
Sarah Gregory

31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

New and expecting parents can feel overwhelmed when dealing with the demands of a newborn or a pregnancy, especially when living overseas. Having a deployed spouse or other children in the home can only increase the stress a parent already feels.

That's where the New Parent Support Program can help alleviate some concerns.

"The purpose of the program is education and the key focus is to help with stressors and decrease incidents of maltreatment within families," said Marisha Grimley, 31st Medical Operations Support Squadron registered nurse. "Under that guise, we do a lot of other things. We offer prenatal and parenting education in the home."

Although the name suggests the program is only for new parents, Ms. Grimley said it's open to all families with young children.

"The name scares a lot of people away, because a lot of times people have two or three kids and think they can't utilize the program, but it's for anybody who has a child age three or under, no matter how many children they have," she said.

Emphasizing education and support, the NPSP can help with a variety of stressors – everything from sibling rivalry to coping with post-partum depression. This type of educational assistance is especially important, Ms. Grimley

said, because there isn't a lot of resources available here.

"There are not a lot of services for pregnant woman, so that's a big obstacle [for them,]" she said. "There aren't resources like there are in the states."

To better educate parents, the NPSP has several ways to get their message out.

"Normally, when someone gets pregnant, they attend OB orientation and that's our first opportunity to enroll them," said Ms. Grimley. "We brief at the orientation and if we miss them there, hopefully they'll take one of the classes."

If the NPSP staff misses parents at the classes, they have a chance to catch them right after delivery. Pediatrics does a well-baby check at two weeks and can refer parents to the program. The nurses do everything they can to advertise their services in an effort to prevent stressors from developing into a problem.

Another condition that can lead to stress is the amount of first term Airmen stationed here with their families.

"We have a lot of really young families here. A lot of first term Airmen come here with families and, because of a lack of resources, there's even more stress," said Ms. Grimley. "People don't realize it's harder to get a phone here; you may not have internet where you're living; you may have a cell phone and not a home phone. Its those types of things that you don't comprehend about life in Italy."

If parents enroll in the program, they see a nurse twice a month, whether in

the home or at the NPSP office. A parent can stay enrolled as long as they need to and there's no minimum requirement. While a parent can come in with their child, NPSP program assistant Kristina Garcia said it's more beneficial for the nurses to visit families at their homes.

"It's better if we can see them there because it's more relaxed that way, more in their comfort zone," she said. "It's also a way to interact with them and spot potential stressors."

Completely separate from life skills, NPSP can do the same types of stress counseling as life skills without generating a life skills record.

"We keep our own records under double lock and nobody has access to them – not commanders, supervisors, first sergeants, not even doctors at the medical group – it's a completely separate entity," said Ms. Grimley.

The nurses that work for the congressionally-mandated NPSP are required to have bachelor's degrees in nursing and at least three years experience in community health or maternal child care such as obstetrics or pediatrics. The Air Force is the only military branch that specifically uses registered nurses.

"People think that we're there to check on them but that's really not the case. We're just here to help," said Ms. Grimley. "We're someone you can call if you have questions at any time."

For more information on NPSP classes or playgroups, call Ext. 5667 or visit Family Advocacy in Bldg. 108 in Area One.

Congratulations to these Aviano families on their newest additions



Photo by Senior Airman Sarah Gregory

From left: Senior Airman Rodney Perkins, 31st Maintenance Squadron, and his wife Susan stand with their new son, Evan, born at 2:38 a.m. Jan. 4; Airman Bryan Outly, 31st Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, and his wife Nicole stand with their new son Colin, who was born at 6:44 a.m. Jan. 4; Tech. Sgt. Sean Boyle, 31st Maintenance Squadron, and his wife Rachel stand with their new son, Gabriel Slade, who was born at 5:54 a.m. Jan. 4; and Tracey Hodkin stands with her new daughter Alyssa Lynn, born at 9:56 p.m. Jan. 3. The father is Airman 1st Class Randall Jay Hodkin.

Zayn Gaige Dotson was born Dec. 17 to Bethany and Senior Airman James Dotson, 31st Civil Engineer Squadron.

Noah Christian Ruiz was born Nov. 7 to Senior Airman Erin Ruiz, 31st Logistics Readiness Squadron, and Staff Sgt. Ricardo Ruiz, 603rd Air Control Squadron.

Dylan James Johnston was born Dec. 24 to Terri and Airman 1st Class Theodor Johnston, 31st Aircraft Maintenance Squadron.

Maliah Jenae Price was born Nov. 28 to James and Senior Airman Valerie Price, 31st Security Forces Squadron.

Thomas Aidan Donovan was born Dec. 6 to Liliana and Tech. Sgt. John Donovan, 2nd Air Postal Squadron, Malpensa International Airport, Milan.

Austin Wyatt Smith was born Dec. 15 to Genea and Staff Sgt. Zachary Smith, 31st Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, and siblings Gabriel and Caleb.

Protecting homes, cars from theft

**By Special Agents
Kostadinka Uncapher
and**

Kevin Forde

*Air Force Office of Special
Investigations, Detachment
531*

The winter season brings an increase of Airmen and dependants who have reported cases of theft.

The majority of larceny incidents have involved private property from homes and vehicles. These incidents seem to occur primarily at night, although there have been cases reported during daylight hours. Cases usually involve tampering of doors and windows to gain access.

Normally, small items are targeted, such as jewelry and cash, as well as military IDs, passports, credit cards, keys, gas coupons, small Christmas presents, clothes and various small electronic items.

Thieves normally avoid con-

frontation, seek targets of opportunity and will flee if disturbed.

Another method used by criminal entities and gypsies are chalk markings indicating potential targets. If strange markings are found on home property, report it immediately to law enforcement officials.

There are suggested precautions people can take to minimize and prevent larceny.

First and foremost is physical security of property. Assure homes are locked and kept secured at all times, especially during hours of darkness. Lock and close all doors and shutters. Keep external lights on during hours of darkness and leave on an internal light or the TV when not at home during the evening.

In addition, it is recommended that all property within vehicles be secured properly and out of plain view, or not left in the vehicle when unattended.

For more information, call OSI at Ext. 7642.

Fire safety tips

- Fireplaces, wood stoves and chimneys should be inspected once a year to ensure that they are in proper operating condition (i.e., no cracks in fireplace masonry or wood stove linings).

- Use only the proper fuel. Don't use coal in a fireplace or stove that is designed only for wood fires. Never use flammable liquids to ignite a fire.

- Try to keep the fire at a moderate level. Continuous burning of wood at a low-fire level may contribute to build-up and increase the potential for chimney fires and the corrosion of metal parts. Inspect the chimney and chimney connector on wood stoves at least twice monthly and clean if necessary. Avoid over-firing the stove, since overheating may damage the stove and chimney connector or cause a fire in adjacent structures.

- Keep children away from fireplaces and wood stoves. They can be burned badly by touching hot surfaces such as fireplace screens or the exterior of a stove.

- Always keep combustible materials (kindling, newspapers, curtains, etc.) a safe distance from fireplaces and wood stoves. *(Information courtesy of U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission)*

MLK: The base chapel and Chaplain (Ret.) Harold Ray host a commemoration service for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at 11 a.m. today.

Concert, from page 1

interesting to see different people and hear their stories," she said.

Traveling with her band and light and sound technicians, her crew of 14 people performed the hit songs that helped rocket her to the top of the country music charts. They also played a surprise rendition of Journey's "Don't Stop Believing" and ended the show with the National Anthem.

Hoping to do another USO tour in the future, Messina is also working on a new album to be released later in the year.

"I told [USO] we were interested in going to Iraq, but we'll go wherever they need us," she said.

Despite being from Massachusetts, which is not typically associated with country music, Ms. Messina said she grew up listening to the classics like Tammy Wynette, Loretta Lynn and Patsy Cline.

"I love the realness of country music," she said. "When I first fell in love with it, I felt like someone



was talking about me. And I think that's why a lot of people gravitate toward country music because the subject matter is about general life experiences."

No matter what type of music a person listens to, Ms. Messina said they can enjoy her concerts.

"Everybody has fun. Me and the band have a blast and I think that the audience always sees that and feels that energy," she said. "We hit the ground running and rock it pretty hard. It's just good music."



Photos by Airman 1st Class Michael Dorus

Above left: Jo Dee Messina jams with one of the guitar players in her band. Although she had hinted she might play an instrument during the concert, Ms. Messina wouldn't say which one. She also took a turn on the drums.

Above: Fans lined up to have CDs and posters autographed by Jo Dee Messina at the base exchange Saturday.

Air Force may hold RIF board if goal not met

By Staff Sgt. Todd Lopez
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON – The Air Force will convene an officer reduction in force board in June if it fails to meet its force-shaping goal, said the service's senior officer for manpower and personnel.

"While the goal has been to reduce active-duty end strength through voluntary programs where possible, if at the end of the extended Voluntary Separation Pay application window the (fiscal year) 2007 goal has not been reached, the remaining losses will be achieved through an officer RIF board in June 2007," said Lt. Gen. Roger A. Brady, Air Force deputy chief of staff for manpower and personnel.

The window for officers to voluntarily separate from the Air Force with the VSP option has been extended to March 31. As of Dec. 28, the service

had approved just over 1,800 applicants for the program. Officers seeking more information about VSP can call the Air Force Personnel Center contact center at 800-616-3775.

General Brady said the RIF board would consider Air Force officers with six to 12 years of active commissioned service in overage career fields from six year groups: 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 2000 and 2001. The RIF board process is expected to achieve approximately 1,000 officer reductions. Officers not selected for retention will be separated by Jan. 29, 2008.

Force shaping is not simply about reducing numbers, however. The Air Force will also ensure that it has the right number of officers and enlisted, with the right rank, in the right career fields.

"The Air Force is in transition and we must focus on optimizing our force structure," General Brady said.

"Through voluntary separations, attrition, adjustments to accessions, retraining, and a RIF board, we can ensure we have the number of officers we need, in the right career fields, and with the right level of expertise. I encourage all commanders to conduct frank discussions with their officers concerning their vulnerability for the RIF board."

In 2004, the Air Force had 372,000 active-duty Airmen. Today, the service has about 347,300. Through force shaping, the goal is to reduce that number by another 31,000 to about 316,000 by fiscal year 2009.

In fiscal year 2007 alone, the Air Force has over 5,500 projected officer losses (about 70 percent of the goal) and 16,500 projected enlisted losses (almost 50 percent of the goal). These losses reflect the combination of targeted force shaping and normal attrition, which total over 30,000 each year.

CCAF briefing: Community College of the Air Force briefings are at 9 a.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays in the education center.

Driving safely in winter weather

By Airman 1st Class
Cody Hobart
31st Fighter Wing Safety

Anyone who has been driving in Italy knows there are several differences between driving here and in the United States.

Aviano drivers are exposed to much smaller vehicle traffic lanes, winding roads, and tailgaters. Mix those driving hazards with winter conditions like slick, icy roads or snow and it can be a recipe for disaster.

To drive safely in Italy, drivers must pay attention and be ready to react to whatever they may encounter.

To make winter driving experiences less stressful, before leaving drivers should make sure their vehicle is in good mechanical condition by checking:

- Tire tread and proper inflation
- Battery for sufficient voltage. Cold weather increases the demands on batteries.
- Engine belts and hoses for wear and cracks
- The coolant system for protection

below freezing levels

- Windshield wipers and fluid
- Vehicle heating and defrosting systems.

If making a long trip, drivers should plan their travel route and get adequate rest the night before. Checking the weather conditions before departing, leaving early, and letting someone know travel plans is a great idea in case anything happens.

Winter conditions often restrict visibility. Before driving, thoroughly scrape all windows, mirrors and the windshield. Allow sufficient time for your vehicle to warm-up and defrost. While driving, slow down when encountering low visibility conditions such as fog, rain or snow.

Drivers must change the way they drive if they meet hazardous road conditions. If encountering snow and icy roads, drive slower and remain in control of the situation.

In the event of an accident, wear the traffic vest and remember to place a warning triangle outside the vehicle to warn other drivers.

Planning ahead and being prepared can help ensure you arrive safely at the final destination.

This week in Air Force history

Jan. 18, 1905

The Wright Brothers opened negotiations with the government for procurement of one airplane.

Jan. 12, 1939

President Roosevelt asked Congress for a revision of the authorization for Army aircraft.

Jan. 13, 1975

The Secretary of the Air Force, Dr. John McLucas, selects the General Dynamics YF-16 prototype as the Air Force's air combat fighter, a low-cost, lightweight, highly-maneuverable fighter aircraft.

Jan. 17, 1991

Strikes by U.S. and allied aircraft opened the air campaign portion of Operation Desert Storm against Iraq.

Jan. 13, 1993

Maj. Susan Helms, a member of the space shuttle Endeavor crew, becomes the first U.S. military woman in space.

Jan. 13, 1994

The final F-15 Eagle of the 32nd Fighter Group departs Soesterberg Air Base, ending 40 years of U.S. Air Force operations in the Netherlands.

A look back at 2006

Between working hard and winning awards, Aviano members have taken the time to lend a hand in the community, train for any situation, and have some fun in the process, making 2006 one busy year.

January

When I'm 64 – U.S. Air Forces in Europe, the Air Force's oldest active major command, celebrated its 64th anniversary. What became USAFE began its existence as the Eighth Air Force in Savannah, Ga., Jan. 19, 1942.

Buzzards receive new roost – The 510th Fighter Squadron and 510th Aircraft Maintenance Unit moved into a new building. The facility combined the maintenance, operations and administrative aspects of the squadron, which improved communication and organization.

February

Aviano creates food pantry – The food pantry helps Airmen and their families make it through the hard times and remain anonymous. The pantry offers two different types of boxes; one has everything needed to make a complete meal and 'baby boxes' have necessities like diapers and baby food.

First Lady visits Aviano – Laura Bush made a stop at Aviano on her way to the

2006 Winter Olympics in Torino, Italy. During her visit, Mrs. Bush spoke directly with Air Force and Army members who had recently arrived home from deployments in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Tuskegee Airman speaks to Aviano – African American pioneer and WWII fighter pilot, Lt. Col. (Ret.) Lee "Buddy" Archer Jr. spoke to the community at one of Aviano's African-American History Month events. Colonel Archer talked about his struggles as a Tuskegee Airman and gave advice for Airmen currently serving.

March

Idol craze sweeps Aviano – Eleven contestants sang for the rights to be called the Aviano Idol. With her rendition of "Do Right Woman," by Aretha Franklin, Senior Airman Elizabeth Milliken, 31st Maintenance Squadron, won \$350 and a chance to represent Aviano at the U.S. Air Forces in Europe Idol competition.

Area Two gym renovated – The 31st Services squadron renovated the Area Two Fitness Center and added part of the former

child development center to create more space and upgrade the workout rooms. The efforts to fix up the gym have increased its usage by 200 percent.

April

Volunteers plant trees, future – About 200 Aviano volunteers helped the students of Edmondo De Amicis Elementary School in Giais plant trees in the local community. The residents of Giais and the school have continued this tradition for 21 years and this was the first year Aviano participated.

X-ray vision – The 31st Medical Support Squadron radiology flight transitioned its X-ray capabilities from film to digital. The new system allows patients to take X-ray copies on film or CD to their next PCS destination or to outside providers.

Volunteer picnic – In honor of Aviano's volunteers, the 31st Fighter Wing held a base-wide picnic. Aviano volunteers donated 132,257 hours of their time in 2005.

May

Medics train for any situation – Area D was transformed into a field hospital for the 31st Medical Group's continual medical readiness training course. The training was designed to give participants real-world instruction in providing medical care under field conditions.

Remembering – The 603rd Air Control Squadron held a remembrance ceremony to honor the five "Scorpions" who lost their lives since the squadron began operating here in 1994. The ceremony included the unveiling of a monument dedicated to Airman 1st Class Antoine Holt, who was killed April 10, 2004, during a mortar attack at Balad Air Base, Iraq.

Party time, M.A.S.H. style – The Aviano community got together for a dining out, M.A.S.H. style. The dining out was a chance for the community to experience a unique military tradition with a twist.



First Lady Laura Bush and the official U.S. Olympic delegation stopped here Feb. 10 to speak to the Aviano community. Mrs. Bush also talked with Air Force and Army members who had returned from deployments in Afghanistan and Iraq.



Airmen pick up fallen ceramic tiles blown off the flightline dormitory roofs after a severe thunderstorm swept through Aviano June 29.

June

Scorpions deploy, visit family – During an eight-day deployment training exercise in Maniago, more than 120 “Scorpions” received a visit from their families. The visit was designed to “show our families what their military member does [during a deployment] in hopes that it might ease some anxieties,” said Lt. Col. Jennifer Spears, former 603rd ACS commander.

Good neighbors – Two Aviano F-16 pilots and several Aviano maintenance and security forces members met with the Serbian air force during a visit to Batajnica Air Base, Serbia. During the two-day visit, Aviano mechanics met with Serbian maintainers to learn about each other’s aircraft and the pilots learned about their Serbian counterparts.

July

After the storm – A severe thunderstorm struck Aviano, causing an estimated \$3.5 million in damages. Sustained winds of 50 knots and a maximum speed of 82 knots were registered before the equipment stopped working. The Health and Wellness Center took a major hit when the roof caved in and an Army Black Hawk helicopter assigned to Company B, 158th Aviation Regiment, flipped over when the clam shell it was in fell apart.

Reaching new heights – Aviano’s new air traffic control tower began launching and landing jets. The tower, which is a combined U.S. Air Force and Italian air force facility gives air traffic controllers a panoramic view of the flightline and surrounding tower. The old tower, built in the 1950s, was three stories tall, while the new one is eight.

New medical clinic – The new three-

story medical treatment facility officially opened in Area One. The MTF houses family practice, pediatrics, OB/GYN, surgery/orthopedics, ancillary services, radiology and a laboratory.

Spouse It Up – The Airmen and Family Readiness Center’s Spouse It Up program celebrated one year of community involvement. With event themes from “Hanging out in the Park” to “Bowling for Turkeys,” the monthly program helps those new to Aviano and those who would like to get connected with other spouses.

August

TACP squadron arrives – Aviano received a new squadron of warfighters from Caserma Ederle, Vicenza. The highly-decorated, airborne-qualified 8th Air Support Operations Squadron brought 40 personnel, 15 Humvees and three government vehicles.

September

Building bridges – Working together with multiple Army and Air Force units, members of the 724th Air Mobility Squadron contributed to the Global War on Terrorism. The 724th AMS airlifted 389 tons of bridging material to the 240th Engineer Group in Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, which was used to set up a bridge across the Pech River. The bridge helped increase security and boosted the economy on both sides of the river.

Reaching milestones – A Triple Nickel fighter jet reached 6,000 flying hours – the equivalent of spending more than 5.7 weeks soaring through the air.

October

Charity pull – Various Aviano squad-

rons hosted a Humvee pull at the Dragon Fitness Center to raise money for the Combined Federal Campaign.

Providing care – Two Aviano members joined a team of five U.S. Air Forces in Europe health care providers on a trip to Zambia, South Africa. During the six-day visit, the team examined more than 1,200 patients, and gave 386 eye exams and 198 dental exams.

November

Maintaining excellence – Master Sgt. Timothy Kellner, 31st Aircraft Maintenance Squadron production supervisor, earned the 2006 General Lew Allen Jr. Trophy. The trophy is awarded annually to base-level officers and senior NCOs in aircraft, munitions or missile maintenance who are directly involved in sortie generation.

December

DV visits – The Secretary of the Air Force, Hon. Michael Wynne, visited Aviano and spoke to base personnel about issues affecting today’s Airmen. Some of the things Secretary Wynne discussed were Air Force Smart Operations 21, deployments and the new cyber command.

Building ties – A delegation of Serbian military officers and the defense advisor to the Serbian president Boris Tadic visited Aviano. The Serbians were here as allies observing the 31st Fighter Wing’s organization and readiness.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Randy Mallard

Capt. Summer Fondren, 31st Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, right, races Staff Sgt. Christal Galazo, 31st Civil Engineer Squadron, to win the push up, sit up relay race during the 31st Fighter Wing Sports Day Sept. 25.

Dry cleaners

The Area One dry cleaners will be closed Monday and Tuesday during the expansion to the flightline area. The facility in Area One will re-open Wednesday. The new base exchange cleaners is scheduled to open Jan. 20. Items will have to be picked up at the same location they were dropped off.

AFSA meeting

The next Air Force Sergeants Association general membership meeting is at 3 p.m. Tuesday in the Professional Development Center, Bldg. 220, Area Two.

Space Available

Beginning Jan. 21, the Space Available roll call for Patriot Express missions to Lajes Air Base, Azores, and Baltimore will be conducted an hour earlier than normal. Due to force protection measures, specific times can't be printed. Early check-in for passengers traveling in a PCS or TDY status will still be available the day prior to departure from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

For more information, visit the passenger terminal or call Tech. Sgt. Michael Riggle at Ext. 7680.

New grad program

The education center seeks students interested in obtaining a master's degree in international relations with Oklahoma University. At least 14 people are needed to get the program brought here.

The program consists of 32 credit hours and offers courses in communication, political science, history, human relations, geography and economics. Applicants must have earned a bachelor's degree or the equivalent from an accredited college or university. To learn more about the program, visit <http://www.goou.ou.edu>.

To sign up for the program, call Ext. 5330, or stop by the education center in Bldg 147, Area One. The deadline is Jan. 31.

College grants

The Air Force Aid Society offers grants for Air Force dependents' college

tuition. Visit the Airman and Family Readiness Center or the AFAS Web site at www.afas.org for an application for the General Henry H. Arnold Education Grant Program. For more information, call Ext. 5407.

Job shadow day

Aviano students are looking for people to shadow in a career field they are interested in for Job Shadow Day Feb. 2. Arrangements can be made directly with the student or through the school.

To volunteer for a student shadow, e-mail Debbie Lee at debbie.lee@eu.dodea.edu for the middle school or Kim James at kimberly.james@eu.dodea.edu for the high school. Parents of elementary school students will receive information electronically as to the elementary school involvement.

Valentine's Day

The Community Center is selling Valentine's Day bouquets with free delivery to the Flightline Area, Area One and Two, and the Civil Engineer compound, if ordered by Jan. 31. To place an order, call Ext. 5479.

ERAU registration

Embry Riddle Aeronautical University Term III registration continues through Jan. 26. To register for classes, visit the education center in Bldg. 147, Area One.

For more information, call ERAU at Ext. 5140.

Dance, dance

- A two-hour full-immersion salsa class for adults is at 7 p.m. Jan. 22 in the Community Center ballroom. The class is open to singles and couples. The deadline to sign up is Wednesday.

- A two-hour full-immersion country two-step and swing dancing class is at 7 p.m. Jan. 24 in the Community Center ballroom. The deadline to sign up is Jan. 19.

- A two-hour full-immersion tango class is at 7 p.m. Jan. 29 in the Community

Center ballroom. The deadline to sign up is Jan. 24.

Call 347-331-5569 for more information or to sign up.

Filing taxes

Aviano members who are about to deploy and have not filed their tax returns, can give someone they trust the authority to file on their behalf. This can be done through a power of attorney or IRS Form 2848.

Call the legal office at Ext. 7844 for more information.

Little Sprouts

Little Sprouts, a class designed to teach new and expecting parents about basic baby care and normal newborn appearance, is taught at 5:30 p.m. Feb. 5 and 12 at the Life Skills Support Center, Bldg. 108, Area One.

The class provides information on infant cues, safety, parenting, discipline, and growth and developmental information regarding children up to three years of age. This class is taught every other month.

For more information, or to sign up for classes, call the New Parent Support Program at Ext. 5667.

NCO development

An NCO Professional Enhancement Seminar is scheduled for Feb. 20-24 at the Professional Development Center, Bldg. 220 in Area One.

The course is for staff or technical sergeants who attended Airman Leadership School more than three years ago, and have not attended NCO Academy. The seminar offers a unique opportunity for junior NCOs to interact with their peers, senior leadership panels, and Senior NCOs.

To sign up for the seminar, visit the Aviano Professional Development Web page at <https://afkm.wpafb.af.mil/ASPs/CoP/OpenCoP.asp?Filter=OO-DP-JF-21> or call Master Sgt. Michael Remmert at Ext. 4480.

Reel Times

Today, 7 p.m. - "Night at the Museum" Rated PG - A security guard must save the museum of natural history thieves take an ancient artifact that brings the displays to life. Starring: Ben Stiller, Carla Gugino

Today, 10 p.m. - "Borat" Rated R - Borat Sagdiyev travels from his home in Kazakhstan to the U.S. to make a documentary. Starring: Sacha Baron Cohen, Kenneth Davitian

Saturday, 2 and 4:30 p.m. - "Flushed Away" Rated PG - An uptown rat, flushed down the toilet from his penthouse apartment, ends up in the sewers of London, where he has to learn a new and different way of life. Animated

Saturday, 7 p.m. - "We are Marshall" Rated PG-13 - The true story of a small town steeped in the tradition of college football, trying to heal after 75 members of their football team and coaching staff are killed in a plane crash. Starring: Matthew McConaughey, Matthew Fox

Sunday, 7 p.m. - "Eragon" Rated PG-13 - A boy finds a dragon hatchling in the forest and is thrust into a world of magic and power through which he and the dragon must navigate. Starring: Edward Speleers, Jeremy Irons

Wednesday, 7 p.m. - "Borat" Rated R

Thursday, 7 p.m. - "A Good Year" Rated PG-13 - An investment expert leaves the business life behind when he inherits a vineyard from his uncle. Starring: Russell Crowe, Albert Finney

(Titles and times are courtesy of www.aafes.com, and are subject to change.)

Fly Bys

Local events

- The Massarrah belly dancers will perform at 9 p.m. Jan. 20 at the Concordia auditorium in Pordenone. For more information and tickets, call 347-245-3712.

- A Marc Chagall etching exhibition is displayed at the Corso Garibaldi in Pordenone through March 11.

The exhibit is open from 2:30 to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. For more information, call 0434-231418 or visit www.triennaleincisione.it.

- A nativity exhibition runs through Jan. 21 at the Arena di Verona. For details, visit www.presepiarenaverona.it.

- An Andy Warhol exhibit is on display through Jan. 27 at the Vecchiato New Art Galleries in Padova. For more information, visit www.vecchia-toarte.it.

Call Ext. 7555 for more information.

Tips for traveling

- Travelers who leave the country should make sure they have a valid passport that is signed.

- To avoid violating local laws, when making purchases or exchanging money, deal only with legal vendors.

For more traveling safety tips, visit www.travelstate.gov.

Bratislava

A young city with old-world charm

By Capt. Melissa Waheibi
31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Bratislava is one of the youngest capitals in Europe. It is the capital of Slovakia and the country's largest city.

The end of communist rule in Czechoslovakia in 1989 was followed by the country's dissolution into two successor states. Slovakia and the Czech Republic went their separate ways after Jan. 1, 1993, an event sometimes called the Velvet Divorce, but Slovakia has remained close partners with the Czech Republic, as well as with other Central European countries.

Slovakia became a member of the European Union in May 2004, and is an easy travel destination from Aviano. About a 6-hour drive, Bratislava is only 50 km from the Austrian capital, Vienna.

Bratislava is picturesquely situated on both banks of the Danube, at the base of the outlying spurs of the Lesser Carpathians

mountain range. Its Eastern European architecture and old-world flair provide a charming backdrop to its modernizing culture and ever-growing economic buildup.

Bratislava's Old Town Centre is a unique portion of town, home to dozens of shops and restaurants easily accessible to tourists.

Local museums include the Bratislava Castle, Old Town Hall, St. Michael's Tower, and Devin Castle located about 12 km outside the city center. The Opera in Bratislava is popular among international visitors. Opera performances are subtitled in Slovak or Germans, so it is advisable for English-language speakers to familiarize themselves with the plot in advance.

The Bratislava night life is eclectic with typical clubs and bars but also includes places specializing in jazz and Latin music as well.

Although Slovakia doesn't plan to adopt the Euro until 2009, it is still accepted in common tourist areas.



Photo courtesy of picture-newsletter.com

Left: Situated on both banks of the Danube River, Bratislava is one of the youngest capitals in Europe. Once part of Czechoslovakia, the city is unique in architecture and design. The oldest part of town is home to shops and restaurants.

Riding the rails: Travel Italy or see Europe without driving. Visit www.trenitalia.com for train schedules and ticket information.



Photo by Senior Airman Colleen Wieman

Home to Michelangelo's David, **Florence** is considered the birth place of the Renaissance. ITT will take a guided trip to this city Jan. 20.

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Information, Tickets and Tours

Upcoming tours from the Information, Tickets and Tours office include:

- Saturday - Guided Trieste, Miramare Castle and Grotta Gigante cave
- Jan. 20 - Slovenia - Ljubljana, Postumia Caves, and Predjama Castle

ITT escorts ensure the group arrives and departs from destinations as scheduled and will do everything possible to

make the trip safe and comfortable. Escorts also provide general information about the area.

Please note weather conditions and dress accordingly. The ITT staff recommends wearing comfortable shoes because most tours involve walking. Call Ext. 5072 or 5026 for more information.

Winter bike tips make a cool ride

By Senior Airman Sarah Gregory
31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Because of Aviano's location and temperate climate, cycling year-round is possible. However, there are some things to take into consideration when gearing up for a winter ride.

"I usually recommend wearing clothing made of synthetic materials," said Jason Patton, Draghi Cycling group member. "I definitely don't recommend anything cotton, especially as a base layer, because in the winter it doesn't allow the perspiration to evaporate, so once you really get wet underneath your clothing. It's hard to dry out and stay warm."

Patton also recommends dressing in layers so riders can shed outer layers to remain cool during hard efforts and put something back on when temperatures drop.

"It's a good idea to account for the fact that you'll be warmer once you get started but dress well enough that if you do have to stop for flats, injuries or mechanical problems, you can still keep yourself warm," he said.

In the wetter seasons of spring and fall, having a small waterproof vest or lightweight waterproof jacket can protect against sudden rain showers.

One often overlooked cycling apparel item is gloves, which are important no matter what season it is, said Patton.

"I always recommend a full-fingered glove for anybody, regardless of their level and the length of the ride," he said. "Eventually you're going to hit the ground. It's inevitable. The brunt of the fall, if it's at a low speed, is going to be on your hands. If you wear full-fingered gloves, you can just dust yourself off and not worry about cutting your hands and palms on rocks or gravel."

After wearing the proper clothing, Patton said the next most important factor for safe winter riding is staying hydrated.

"A lot of times people don't feel hot or they don't feel their bodies sweating because they're covered in so much clothing, but it's very easy to lose just as many fluids in the wintertime without noticing as it is in the summertime," he said.

As a minimum, Patton recommends drinking one bottle of sports drink per hour of riding and avoiding drinking plain water.

"The problem with just water is that you are more likely to get cramps and early fatigue because you run the risk of flushing your body of electrolytes," said the six-year biking veteran. "When you do this, your muscles lose the ability to perform well because you need the salt to retain fluids."

As with any sport or physical activity, warming up before a work out is also essen-



Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Holzworth

Wearing gloves year-round can prevent hand injuries in case of a fall, and protect against cold weather.

tial to preventing injuries.

"A very light spin for about 10-15 minutes before any hard effort helps your muscles warm up, but it also gets the body used to the extra effort so that you can supply energy to your muscles much easier when you are ready for that hard effort," said Patton. "It will prevent fatigue in the long run if you take a few minutes to warm up and get your body used to it and add a little bit of endurance."

While the temperatures generally remain above freezing, frostbite is still a real possibility, especially when riding against wind or up in the mountains.

"Limit your rides so you have the ability for your hands and feet to warm up. Always plan a few stops to go inside, get a cappuccino or socialize with friends and give your extremities a chance to warm up. That way you can still get time in on the bike without risking real damage," said Patton. "Even with gloves and socks, after a few hours your hands and feet slowly start to go numb."

Fly Bys

Volksmarch

The Aviano Road Runners are participating in a Volksmarch at 8 a.m. Sunday. The group meets at the Bar Municipio in Roveredo and heads to Versutta di Casarsa della Delizia. For more information, call Ext. 7692 or 7404.

Hockey players

The Aviano Ice Dragons are looking for hockey players. The team practices at 7:30 p.m. Mondays and Thursdays in Claut. Pads and helmets are required and available online. For more information, call Mark Boucher at 346-086-5270.

Friday golfing

People who play golf on Fridays during January are eligible to win a free golf cart rental for nine holes. Winners will be notified the next business day. For more information, call the Alpine Golf Course at Ext. 7386.

Ski fittings

Outdoor recreation offers ski and snowboard fittings and the staff can fix or tune-up winter sports equipment. For more information, call Ext. 8623.

Football frenzy

Football games can be watched Sundays and Tuesdays at the La Bella Vista Club. The club will also have weekly contests to win Monday Night Football, Super Bowl and Pro Bowl tickets. For more information, call Ext. 4303.

50 cent deal

The bowling center offers 50 cent-a-mania from noon to 6 p.m. Sundays. Guests pay a \$3 cover charge and receive \$.50 on hamburgers, wings, grilled cheese, fries and bowling shoes. All items have a limit and guests must present discount receipt to staff.

Chief shares experiences with wing exercises

**By Chief Master Sgt.
Kenneth Monk**
31st Maintenance Group
superintendent

From the perspective of a qualified inspector who has been lucky enough to personally see some of our allies' performances, I thought the last exercise went well.

As with any tough endeavor, the wing makes significant strides before we're ready to showcase our capabilities and professionalism.

Some may question if it's necessary for the Air Force to prove anything. We are the best staffed, best equipped and best trained air force in the world.

Perhaps some earlier history will help bring into focus why it's important we participate in combat readiness tests.

My first exercise was in August 1986 when I was as a staff sergeant at RAF Alconbury, England. At that time, the U.S. and NATO were engaged in the final years of the Cold War.

I don't recall thinking in 1986 that long shifts in full field and chemical-warfare gear were that much fun. It didn't help that I was tasked to conduct end-of-runway inspections on an aircraft I was unfamiliar with. It was a considerably different responsibility

on a considerably different aircraft, but it was my duty to do the job to the best of my ability.

Local exercises in those days would typically go on for four or five days. At the end of the exercise, an announcement would come over the giant-voice system to take cover from an inbound attack and then the exercise ended.

The threats posed by our adversaries were real and pretty darned scary.

The world has changed, and so have the threats.

The Air Force demonstrates its commitment to freedom and strengthens NATO by proving its capability in evaluations. I'm convinced it was combined strength through shared values and strong alliances that pre-

vailed in the Cold War and that same combined strength will deter or defeat enemies of today and the future.

You represent more than yourself, the wing and the Air Force to the evaluators. You represent the commitment of America to freedom throughout the world.

Fulfill your duties with pride, professionalism and discipline. Don't take shortcuts on your job, whatever it is. Respond to simulated attacks and wear your protective gear like your life depends on it – you may one day be in a situation where it does.

Some evaluators may never see another Air Force unit in action, and we owe them a demonstration of air power befitting the "World's Finest."

“ You represent more than yourself, the wing and the Air Force ... Fulfill your duties with pride, professionalism and discipline. Don't take shortcuts on your job, whatever it is. Respond to simulated attacks and wear your protective gear like your life depends on it – you may one day be in a situation where it does. ”

Recognizing The World's Finest

• Congratulations to Aviano's major selects: **Michael Tomm**, 31st Contracting Squadron; **Joshua DeMotts**, 31st Civil Engineer Squadron; **Jeffrey Lin** 31st CES; **Jeffrey Berlakovich**, 31st Logistics Readiness Squadron; **Johnna Perdue**, 31st Medical Operations Squadron; **Jeffery Peterson**, 31st MDOS; **Krisandra Smith**, 31st MDOS; **Casey Ratliff**, 510th Fighter Squadron; **Ethan Myers**, 555th Fighter Squadron; **Douglas Riggs**, 555th FS; **Bary Flack**, 724th Air Mobility Squadron; and **Shawna Kimbrell**, inbound.

• Congratulations to **Senior Master Sgt. Charles Adams**, 31st Operations Support Squadron, for his selection for promotion to chief master sergeant.

• Congratulations to the following Airmen for their outstanding completion of their career development courses: **Staff Sergeant Daniel Barker**, 31st Aircraft Maintenance Squadron; **Senior Airman Brandon Patterson**, 31st AMXS; **Senior Airman Aaron Wells**, 31st AMXS; **Senior Airman Mitchell Reves**, 31st Maintenance Squadron; **Senior Airman William Greene**, 31st MXS; **Airman 1st Class Kevin Carroll**, 31st MXS; **Airman 1st Class Joshua Wilson**, 31st MXS; **Airman 1st Class Ian Seagle**, 31st Services Squadron; and **Staff Sgt. Emanuela Pollano**, 725th Air Mobility Squadron.

• Congratulations to **Staff Sgt. Jacob Hughey**, 31st Maintenance Squadron; **Senior Airman Scott Albertson**, 31st Communications Squadron; and **Airman 1st Class Andrew Ryle**, 31st MXS,

for receiving Air Force Sergeants Association Chapter 1657 scholarships for Term II. These Airmen will each receive a \$100 check to help with the cost of books and tuition.

AFSA scholarships are open to all E-6 and below Airmen and their family members. Applications can be found at the base education center, by contacting first sergeants, or attending AFSA meetings held the third Tuesday of each month in Bldg. 220 in Area Two.

The Air Force Sergeant Association would also like to thank everyone who supported Operation Angel Tree.

• Congratulations to **Master Sgt. Richard Lund**, 31st Services Squadron, for winning first place in the 2006 Holiday Door Decorating Contest with his creative "Frosty the Snowman" door. Sergeant Lund received a \$150 gift certificate towards a cosmic bowling party, golf tournament, or La Bella Vista Club party.

The second place winner of the door decorating contest is **Tech. Sgt. Chris Power**, 31st Maintenance Squadron, for his "Santa and his troop of elves" door. Sergeant Power received a \$100 gift certificate towards a cosmic bowling party, golf tournament, or La Bella Vista Club party.

The third place winner is **Belinda Dowdie**, Defense Commissary Agency, for her "Happy Santa" door. Ms. Dowdie received a \$75 gift certificate towards a cosmic bowling party, golf tournament, or La Bella Vista Club party.